

which will be acceptable to American Ornithologists. After a preface, in which the topography and ornithological history of Essex County are described, the birds are taken according to the order of the American Check-list, and remarks on each of them are given. The total number of species and subspecies considered is 354, of which 319 are now extant. The lighthouses on the Essex coast have received special attention, and it seems to be shown that the birds which strike them nowadays are much less numerous than was formerly the case. The most remarkable record is that of September 3rd, 1899, on which night an enormous flock of Phalaropes dashed against the lights on Cape Ann, "so that the dead and dying covered the ground, and one man is stated to have picked up 800 of them."

The Ring-necked Pheasant (*Phasianus torquatus*), introduced in 1893, is now a "common permanent resident in Essex County."

XLII.—Obituary. Sir WALTER BULLER.

Sir WALTER LAWRY BULLER, K.C.M.G., well known to all ornithologists as the historian of the Birds of New Zealand, and our chief authority on that subject, died at Fleet, in Hampshire, on the 19th of July last.

Sir Walter was born in 1838, and was the son of the Rev. James Buller, of Canterbury, New Zealand, who was descended from an old Cornish family of that name. Taking the Law as his profession, he was Resident Magistrate and Native Commissioner from 1862 to 1872. During the Maori war of 1865 he served on Sir George Grey's staff as a volunteer, for which he received a medal and was mentioned in despatches. In 1874 Sir Walter was called to the English Bar, at the Inner Temple, and after that year was frequently resident in this country, being appointed a member of the New Zealand Commission for the Colonial Exhibition of 1886, and of the Executive Council for the

British Section of the Paris Exhibition of 1889. He also represented New Zealand on the governing body of the Imperial Institute, and served his native colony in other similar appointments.

Though devoted to every branch of natural history, and also a good ethnologist, Sir Walter's special pursuit was ornithology. He devoted himself from his earliest youth to the study of the native birds of New Zealand, and published his first essay on the subject at Dunedin in 1865. This led the way to the preparation of his well-known 'History of the Birds of New Zealand,' a quarto volume, admirably illustrated, which was published in London in 1873. The stock of this excellent work being quickly exhausted, the author set to work to prepare a second edition in two volumes, containing many additions and alterations, which was finished in 1888. Meanwhile, however, he had also written an octavo 'Manual' of the Birds of the Colony, suitable for settlers and field-naturalists, which was published at Wellington in 1882. Finally, Sir Walter, after seventeen more years had elapsed, resolved that it was expedient to summarize the additional information that had been obtained on the subject during that period in a Supplement, which we have fully described in the last number of this journal (see above, p. 582). This "Supplement" contains an account of all the birds known in New Zealand up to the present time, and is illustrated by five coloured plates drawn by Keulemans.

Besides these important works, Sir Walter published many papers in 'The Ibis,' the 'Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London,' and the 'Transactions of the New Zealand Institute.' In acknowledgment of his scientific work he was made a Doctor of Science in the University of Cambridge, a Corresponding Member of the Zoological Society, and a Member of the British Ornithologists' Union. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1879, and in 1886 was made K.C.M.G. But, not quite content with his English honours, Sir Walter had an innocent pleasure in obtaining distinctions from foreign countries. He became a Knight Commander of the Crown of Italy, a Knight

of the Order of Francis-Joseph of Austria, of Frederick of Württemberg, and of Philip of Hesse-Darmstadt, and an Officer of the Legion of Honour in France. Three species of birds which bear his name as their specific title—*Larus bulleri* of Hutton, *Diomedea bulleri* of Rothschild, and *Puffinus bulleri* of Salvin—will recall his fame to the memory of the future ornithologists of New Zealand.

List of Sir Walter Buller's principal Ornithological Works.

- Essay on the Ornithology of New Zealand. 8vo. Dunedin, 1865.
 A History of the Birds of New Zealand. 4to. London, 1873.
 ——. 2nd edition. 2 vols. 4to. London, 1887-88.
 Manual of the Birds of New Zealand. 8vo. Wellington, 1882.
 A Classified List of Mr. S. William Silver's Collection of New Zealand Birds (at the Manor House, Letcombe Regis). 8vo. London, 1888.
 Illustrations of Darwinism, or the Avifauna of New Zealand considered in relation to the Fundamental Law of Descent with Modification. 8vo. Wellington, 1895.
 Supplement to the Birds of New Zealand. 2 vols. 4to. London, 1905-06.

XLIII.—*Letters, Notes and Extracts.*

THE following letters addressed "To the Editors of 'The Ibis'" have been received:—

SIRS,—A Ruff and Reeve (*Machetes pugnax*) visited the marshes within a few miles of Redcar in the summer of 1901, and, judging from subsequent experience of their movements, succeeded in nesting and taking their young brood off in safety.

In the following year a diligent watch was kept for the re-appearance of the visitors, and on the 10th of May the arrival of the Ruff and *two* Reeves was announced. In company with two friends I repeatedly saw the birds and their first nests. The eggs were destroyed by accident about the end of May, but both females nested again, hatched their eggs, and got the young away.

In 1903 the Ruff and one Reeve appeared in May, but